

The Latest Dirt

McLennan County Master Gardener Association
Volume XIII Issue 1 January 2010

Program Preview

The January meeting will be on Wednesday, January 13, at noon at the arboretum. The entire meeting will be used to deal with business matters for the 2010 year. Monthly programs will resume at the February meeting.

Notes from Jan

2010-WOW!

A new year is here with both old and new opportunities and challenges. We have a new office space at the extension office. This is the first time we have ever had any space of our own. The HOT demonstration rose garden is in its first stage. A new MG class will begin in June plus all our on-going projects.

Make MCMG a part of your New Year's Resolution for 2010. Commit to volunteer often wherever your talents are. We have things to be done both inside and outside and we need you. Let us know what you are willing to do.

Our first meeting will be a business meeting to kick off this year. These are some of the things we need from you:

- Current telephone numbers
- Correct address and e-mail
- Choose a committee or team to serve on (sign up sheets will be at the first meeting)
- Challenge ourselves to keep more accurate records and turn them in monthly (a reminder to me!)
- List all the specialists schools you have attended and the date

Share your ideas and suggestions but be willing to take action if your idea is chosen. I think some great ideas came from our Christmas meeting and I hope we can take action on some of them soon.

Take thyme each day to smell the flowers! -Jan

McLennan County Master Gardener Association Officers 2010

President- Jan Serface Vice President- Louie McDaniel Secretary- Nelda Cooper

Treasurer- Irene Dauphin Sponsor- Shane McLellan Newsletter-

Send volunteer hours to Julia Khoury at 8512 Bosque, Waco 76712, or tkhoury@hotmail.com

www.mclennanmastergardeners.org

Educational programs of Texas AgriLife Extension Service serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

Minutes from December Meeting

The McLennan County Master Gardeners met December 9, 2009 at 6 pm at the arboretum for our annual Christmas party. Good food and fellowship was enjoyed by all.

Treasurer's Report: No report was given.

Projects and Committees: A workday is scheduled for January 19, at 8:30 at Cedar Ridge Elementary. A Day in the Greenhouse with the children is scheduled for Jan. 26 from 8:30-2:30. Call Sandy Back at 857-9736, sback@grandecom.net to help.

A workday for the Trailside garden and Superstar bed is planned for Jan. 9 at 9 am. Contact Barbara Vance @ 741-0000 Barbara@vance.com or Anne Plasek @772-4422 eplasek@grandecom.net

The H.O.T. Urban Gardening Coalition will have a planting on MLK Day Jan. 18, 2010. Call Penny Gifford @ 772-3508 pfifford@hotmail.com to help.

Woodway Elementary Green Classroom will have a Garden Day on Jan 16 (time to be determined). Call Kim Dougherty @ 399-8316 Kiminind@yahoo.com

Business: Two new Master Gardeners were welcomed. Missy Kinder and Terry Irvine have completed all requirements. Congratulations to Missy and Terry.

Steven Lovecky presented 5 year pins to the following members: James Bays, Anita Dawson, Steven Lovecky, Sarah McCormick, Ernie Petru, and Carol Wood. Also receiving pins but unable to attend were: Sandy Back, Mark Clark, Xan Foulks, Jene Hering, Maureen Holy, Jeanette Kelly, Barbara Mersinger, Maureen Moulden and Genova Wilson.

Ila Jean Carothers presented 10 year pins to: Victor DuPart, Eva FitzGerald, Judy Schmeltekopf and Jo Von Rosenberg. Judy Tye also received a pin but was not present.

Master Gardeners have 3,682 ¾ hours of volunteering thru Nov. 30, 2009 and 764 ½ education hours and 30,269 contacts.

The program for the evening was for each table to report on ways that Master Gardeners can reach out to the community in new educational opportunities. These will be reviewed by the executive board for the coming year.

The first meeting for 2010 will be January 13 at noon at the arboretum.



Former interns and new members Missy Kinder and Terry Irvine

December Attendance

Jane Anderson, James Bays, Dick Belanger, Ila Jean Carothers, Nelda Cooper, Susan Crawford, Jean Cunningham, Irene Dauphin, Anita Dawson, Kim Dougherty, Victor DuPart, Eva FitzGerald, Kris Ford, Cindy Geletzke, Brenda Golubski, Terry Irvine, Rochelle Kemp, Randy Kemp, Julia Khoury, Missy Kinder, Donna Lindsey, Steven Lovecky, Lori Lutz, Sarah McCormick, Louie McDaniel, Elizabeth Milam, Gerry Milnor, Maureen Moulden, Glidden O'Connor, Sarah Ortiz, Georgia Peterson, Ernie Petru, Anne Plasek, Sherry Prather, Sharon Richardson, Judy Schmeltekopf, Dawn Segrest, Jan Serface, Della Setser, James Storrs, Barbara Vance, Jo Von Rosenberg, Sonia Warriner, Carol Wood.

Call for Recipes

Julia suggested that since there were so many good dishes at the Christmas party it would be a good idea to include some of the recipes in future newsletters if anyone would like to share theirs.

LAST CALL FOR BIG POTS !!

Anyone wanting any of the one gallon and larger black plastic pots stored at my house should get them in January. They will find another home in early February. Call Ila Jean, 848-4321, to make your selections and pick them up.

The Day the Worms Went to School

It was a cold and blustery Friday in December and our energetic and plant-nurturing chairman of the Woodway Elementary School MG veggie garden project, Kim Dougherty, decided we should stay inside.

And so, three Master Composter volunteers brought buckets of live Red Wigglers into 23 classrooms to show 400 K - 4th graders the wonders of worm composting. The concept of creating nutritious black dirt from coffee grounds, banana skins and lettuce leaves with hundreds of little red worms continuously eating and pooping was readily and giggly accepted.

Up went the hands and out flowed the questions: Where is his mouth? Why is his brain so small? If we cut him in half will he still wiggle? The most popular question: Why does the worm have five hearts? That one stumped the volunteers who offered to look it up. "That's okay," said a 3rd grader, "I'll google it and get back to you."

Everyone got to touch the worms and a few went home with some of the kids. They also listened to facts about overflowing landfills, improving Texas soil and the finer points of compost bins and kitchen scraps.

The show and tell sessions were different and fun, but the real payback came from the level of understanding demonstrated by the kids who are starting to sound like old farm hands out in Miss Kim's Garden. They have already planted, watered, harvested and tasted winter, spring and fall crops. The results of their periodic 15 minute outings to toil in the soil may turn them into "green" people for life.

Another payback: More and more teachers have enthusiastically joined the project.

Participation has mushroomed from six classes in the fall of '08 to 25 classes this fall. Some have even linked the garden project to classroom lessons by asking students to log their observations into notebooks. "Name how many things you can find that are purple," a kindergarten teacher asks the children as they carefully count and write while inspecting each of the vegetable beds.

Kim, a music education major at George Fox College in Oregon (class of 1995), says The MG garden project works out well as she has two girls, Aidan, 3rd grade, and Tyne, kindergarten, at WWE who love to see mom come to school. Plus little Dacy, 2, gets to join all this learning activity as unofficial mascot and water girl.

"I love watching the excitement kids display in the garden while they plant, work and enjoy the harvest." says Kim. She adds, "All the help from fellow Master Gardeners makes this a manageable and enjoyable project to coordinate."

-thanks to Sonia Warriner for this report

See good worm info at Uncle Jim's Worm Farm, <http://www.redwigglerworms.com>



January/February Volunteer Opportunities

January 9 9:00 am Superstar Bed and Trailside Gardens "tidy up" morning.
Anne Plasek, eplasek@grandecom.net
Barbara Vance, Barbara@bvance.com

January 16 (time to be determined) WWE Green Classroom Garden Day
Kim Dougherty, kiminind@yahoo.com

January 18...MLK Day of Service
Penny Gifford, pgifford@hot.rr.com

January 19, 8:30Cedar Ridge Green Classroom "tidy up" day
Sandy Back, sback@grandecom.net

January 26, 8:30-2:30...Cedar Ridge "Lessons in the Greenhouse"
Sandy Back, sback@grandecom.net

February 10-11 B.I.G. Conference

Please contact the group leader for any questions. Jan will have a new Community Project Leader during her term.... to be announced with all of her other appointments.

It has been, and still is a privilege to be a part of the MCMGA!

Thank you all!

-Jeanette Kelly

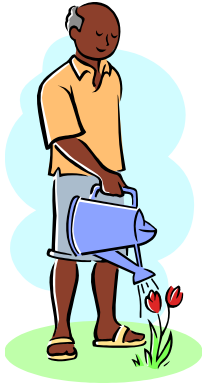
DUES ARE DUE

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If you haven't paid your yearly dues, please do so at the January meeting or mail a check to Irene Dauphin. In person, cash, check, cashier's check, money order, first-born child...

Five and ten year pin winners





Thank you!

It was a pleasure to work with the newsletter for 2009. I learned a good bit about WORD, although I have yet a ways to go. Of course, there couldn't be a newsletter without input, so I'm grateful to all who contributed photos, articles, tips, news items, ad infinitum. Sonia did the thankless job of preparing and mailing the print copies, and was always cheerful and offered useful suggestions on streamlining the process, and never complained about having to do a quick turnaround because deadlines and I have a way of running up against each other. When you name names you run the risk of leaving out important people, but Nelda, Steven and Jeanette had reports for each issue and they were considerate and careful to get those in regularly as requested. I can't leave out a heartfelt thank you to those who lent encouraging words along the way, and you know who you are. I will long remember your kindness.

Whatever direction the newsletter takes for 2010, I know you will support the president and editor as you did me and those who preceded me. Please offer to do submissions if wanted, whatever the form. You will make his or her day.

One last thing- if you see someone starting to top a crape myrtle, try to talk them out of it. If your nandinas are lanky, anytime between now and March is a good time to cut them completely to the ground so they can regrow bushy and full. If your leatherleaf mahonias have any long nude shoots, cut those back to the ground also.

God bless,

James Storrs